



**TOWN OF ACTON**  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**472 MAIN STREET**  
**ACTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 01720**  
**hdc@acton-ma.gov**

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29 May 2013

Mr. Steven Ledoux  
Town Manager  
Town of Acton  
472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

Re: Exchange Hall Rehabilitation

Dear Mr. Ledoux:

On Friday, December 14, 2012, Acton Historic District (HDC) member David Honn, a licensed architect on the Committee, performed a site inspection of the CPC funded project at Exchange Hall. Exchange Hall's owner, Bluebird Realty Trust, Glenn Berger, Trustee was in attendance.

According to the Community Preservation Committee's (CPC) letter dated June 2, 2008 to Glenn Berger of Bluebird Realty Trust (attached), the HDC was following the directive:

"d) Certification to the Town contact person by the Historic District Commission or their agent that the completed work meets the terms of the Certificate of Appropriateness."

"e) Receipt by the Acton Historic District Commission and the Town contact person of all letters and certificates from the National Park Service that qualify the work as a historic rehabilitation project for the 20% federal preservation tax credit. The required National Park Service letters shall certify that:

- Exchange Hall meets the criteria for listing in the National Register (tax credit application Part I, Evaluation of Significance);
- The Exchange Hall rehabilitation plans submitted before the start of any restoration work meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Properties (tax credit application Part II, Description of Rehabilitation); and
- All finished work on Exchange Hall meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (tax credit application Part III, certification of Completed Work).

All work shall comply with the Standards for Rehabilitation set forth in the United States Secretary of the Interiors standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 36 C.F.R. Part 68."

Relevant milestones and dates involving this project include:

Public hearing	21 August 2006
Application to the HDC	1 November 2007
Amended application to the HDC	10 December 2007

HDC Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)	4 July 20007
Amended application to the HDC	5 January 2008
CPC award letter	2 June 2008

The HDC representative has reviewed items noted above as Parts I, II and III and found them to be in compliance with the stated requirements.

Also, as noted above, the application submitted by Exchange Hall was categorized as a "Rehabilitation" under the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 36 C.F.R. Part 68 as distinguished from the other categories of "Preservation", "Restoration" or "Reconstruction". The completed work was compared to the 50 some-odd pages of criteria in the Standard for "Rehabilitation" published by the Secretary of the Interior.

The on-site inspection noted that:

- In general, the workmanship was of high quality.
- The historic character of the building has been preserved and enhanced by this work.
- Design and construction decisions were based on historical research and precedents.
- Substitute materials (such as poly vinyl chloride (PVC) trim) were used judiciously where original wood materials would have been subject to failure.
- Decisions regarding original materials which were indeterminate were researched, discussed and agreed upon with the HDC for appropriateness to the building and the historical era it seeks to preserve.
- It should be noted that the preservation and restoration of the Italianate brackets at the cornice, the wood window sash and the identifying sign "Exchange Hall" were particularly well done.
- Due to the stringent requirements of the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB), the exterior risers on the east and west exterior stairways have an historically inappropriate, triangular-shaped filler piece beneath and parallel to the toe of the tread. It is HDC's understanding that the MAAB is working on standards that will apply specifically to historically significant properties. Ideally these pieces should be replaced if/when the MAAB issues these standards.
- Exterior wood storm sash as described in the "Part 2 -Description of Rehabilitation" by Christine Beard dated November 10, 2008 should be added as funds permit.
- It should be noted that an elevator, originally designed to be added to the rear (north) façade, will be installed entirely within the volume of the original building thus enhancing the historical integrity of the structure.
- It is suggested that documentation (photos, correspondence, meeting minutes, etc.) of the project design and construction be assembled by Exchange Hall's representative and submitted to the appropriate town body (probably the Acton Historical Commission).

To the best of Mr. Honn's knowledge, the Exchange Hall work meets the intent and was completed according the "Rehabilitation" category of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 36 C.F.R. Part 68. The work also meets the intent and was completed according to the conditions stated in the Acton Historic District Commission's Certificate of Appropriateness issued on 4 July 2007.

If you need any additional information, please contact the HDC.

Sincerely,



Kathy Acerbo Bachmann, Chair  
Historic District Commission  
Cc: Community Preservation Committee